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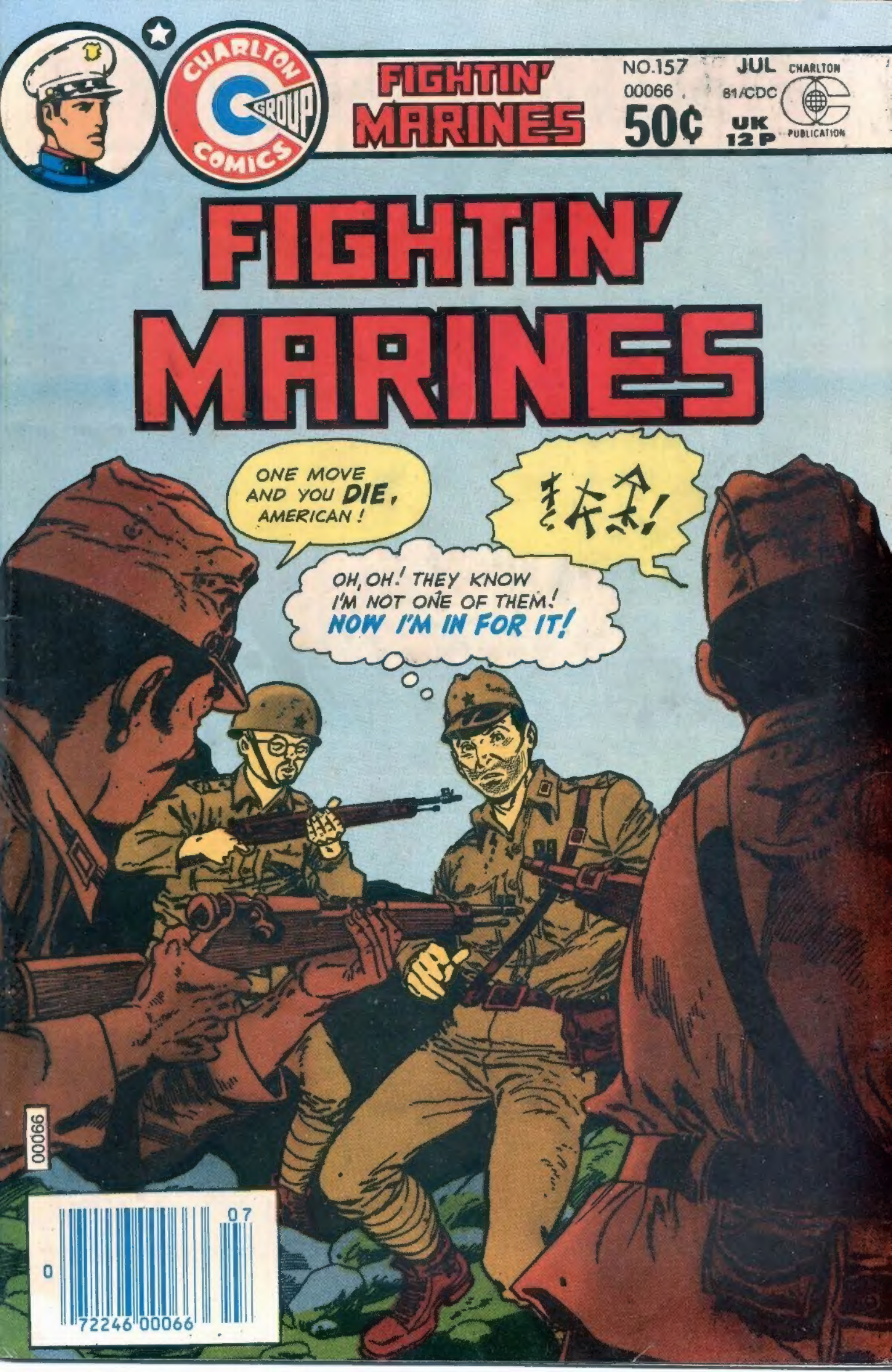
FIGHTIN' MARINES



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THE WAR CRIMINALS

THE 3RD PLATOON, CHARLIE COMPANY, 312TH BTN., HAS AN OBSERVER ALONG AS THEY MOVE INTO THE VILLAGE OF VI DUC IN THE MEKONG DELTA...HE IS TALBOT CLEEVES AND HE'S TROUBLE...THE KIND OF WRITER WHO THINKS AMERICANS HAVE NO BUSINESS IN VIET NAM...WHO BELIEVES THE CHARGES MADE BY COMMIE PROPAGANDISTS...AND WHO'S ALONG WITH THE 3RD PLATOON LOOKING FOR ANY STORY HE CAN USE TO DISCREDIT THE U.S. MARINES! HE'S BUGGING 2ND LT. TOM EGLUND ABOUT SOMETHING WHEN THE BLACK-CLAD CHARLIE DARTS OUT OF THE JUNGLE...BUT CPL. RED IVERSON IS ALERT!

LIEUTENANT EGLUND, I DEMAND YOU PREFER *MURDER CHARGES* AGAINST THE MARINE WHO MURDERED THIS UNARMED MAN.
GET DOWN, YOU FOOL!

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YOUR 'INNOCENT' VILLAGER HAD A GRENADE...HE INTENDED IT FOR *YOU*, CLEEVES.

HE WAS DEFENDING HIS HOME AGAINST INVASION, LIEUTENANT...

...BY *YOU*, THE *U.S. MARINES!*

JUST A MINUTE, MISTER...

CLEEVES

CLEEVES DOESN'T WANT HIS MIND CLUTTERED UP WITH FACT...HE'S CONSTRUCTING HIS OWN SET OF STATISTICS AS HE GOES ALONG.

HE'S GONNA MAKE US OUT TUH BE *MURDERERS*, SKIPPER. WHYN'T YA LET ME BELT HIM ONE?

RELAX, SERGEANT. WE CAN'T! STOP THESE CREEPS FROM WRITING IT THE WAY THEY WANT TO SEE IT.

CLICK CLICK

HE'S GOT *A MARKET* FOR STORIES SLANTED *AGAINST* AMERICANS. HE MAKES NOISES LIKE A BLEEDING HEART BUT ALL HE *CARES* ABOUT IS PEDDLING HIS GARBAGE.

A SEARCH OF THE VILLAGE IS USELESS. THERE'S NO ONE LEFT IN IT...

THERE'S NO MYSTERY. THEY'RE AFRAID THEY'LL GET BOMBED OR YOU'LL USE TEAR GAS ON THEM AS YOU HAVE IN OTHER VILLAGES.

SHUT UP, CLEEVES. SERGEANT, TRY TO FIND A TRAIL...WE'VE GOT TO LOCATE THOSE VILLAGERS BEFORE IT'S *TOO LATE*.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I MEAN THE CHARLIES TOOK EVERYONE *PRISONER*...AND I BELIEVE THEY'RE GOING TO EXECUTE THEM!

EGILIND

THE VIET CONG SEND *TAX COLLECTORS* TO EACH VILLAGE IN THE MEKONG DELTA. THE ONE THEY SENT HERE WAS DRIVEN OUT BECAUSE HIS DEMANDS WERE TOO HIGH. THEY SENT *ASSASSINS* TO KILL THE HEAD MAN...AND THE VILLAGERS KILLED THEM INSTEAD.

SO THE CHARLIES ARE GOING TO WIPE *THEM ALL* OUT TO SHOW OTHER VILLAGES HOW STUPID IT IS TO RESIST THE CONG.

COME, NOW...YOU DON'T EXPECT ME TO *BELIEVE* THAT NONSENSE, DO YOU?

THEY CAME THIS WAY, ALL RIGHT.

YOU MARINES ARE AS TIMID AS OLD LADIES. THERE'S NOTHING IN THIS CLEARING. *COME ON.*

STICK TO THE TRAIL, MARINES. IF WE'RE ATTACKED, *DON'T SPREAD OUT!* SERGEANT, STAY BEHIND US WITH THE MORTAR SQUAD.

RIGHT, SKIPPER. MORTAR SQUAD, SET UP OVER HERE.

SUDDENLY...

RAT-A-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT

POW

POW

POW

KEEP DOWN, YOU GUYS! LET THE MORTAR SQUAD SOFTEN 'EM UP FOR US!

ZIP

ZING

ZIZ

NICE SHOOTIN', MAGEE! NOW...SWITCH TO *SMOKE SHELLS!*

A THICK PALL OF SMOKE DRIFTS ACROSS THE WINDLESS CLEARING...THE VIET CONG CANNOT SEE THE MARINES NOW...

COME ON, CLEEVES...WE'RE GOING IN THERE AFTER THEM!

TH-THEY'LL WIPE YOU OUT! *YOU'RE ALL INSANE!*

USMC

NORTH VIETNAMESE OFFICER COMMANDING THE GROUP. SEE IF YOU CAN TAKE SOME PRISONERS!

STOP IT! STOP THIS SENSELESS KILLING!

OKAY, WRITER...YOU CAN HAVE *THIS ONE* FOR A GIFT!

CONTINUED AFTER THE NEXT PAGE

HE'S ALL YOURS, WRITER.

MAKE SURE THERE AREN'T ANY PLAYING POSSUM WITH A GRENADE OR AUTOMATIC WEAPON TO USE ON US WHEN WE TURN OUR BACKS.

CLICK CLICK

POOR LITTLE GUY...CAN'T WEIGH ANY MORE THAN 100 POUNDS...*HE'S LIKE A SCHOOL KID BACK HOME!*

CLICK

HOLD ON, CORPORAL! WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO WITH THIS ONE?

TAKE HIM HOME FOR A SOUVENIR. YOU *WANTED* HIM...YOU *GOT* HIM!

USMC

THE CHARLIE HAD DROPPED HIS A.R. IN THE BRUSH... NOW, HE REACHES DOWN, RETRIEVES IT, AND LOOKS AT TALBOT CLEEVES...

NOW, *WAIT* A MINUTE! I SAVED YOUR LIFE! THE MARINE WOULD'VE ...*CORPORAL!*

NO! NO! NOT LIKE THIS. I WAS ON *YOUR SIDE!*

YANK CRY LIKE BEBI. *CRY, DIE.*

WAIT! DON'T I...

BRATATATATA

I'M SORRY, WRITER. I GUESS I WAS *BRUTAL* AGAIN LIKE YOU SAID IN YOUR LAST STORY.

QUIT IT, CORPORAL. THE POOR MAN WAS DAZED BY WHAT WAS HAPPENING, THAT'S ALL. HE THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO HURT HIM... THAT'S ALL.

WE DON'T BELONG HERE. THIS IS BETWEEN THE VIET CONG AND THE VIET NAMESE GOVERNMENT. *WE'RE INTRUDERS!*

WHY DON'T YOU *GROW UP*, CLEEVES.

CLEEVES

WRITER

RESCUE

COMMUNIST INFILTRATORS KEPT COMING INTO SOUTH VIET NAM FROM THE NORTH. SUPPLIES FROM THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS AND THE REST OF THE COMMUNIST WORLD HAVE BEEN FLOODING SOUTH VIET NAM FOR YEARS.

ALL LIES, LIEUTENANT. THE TRUTH IS...

IF YOU'D LOOK AROUND, CLEEVES, YOU'D GET ALL THE PROOF YOU NEED. COME ON...

IN A CLEARING DEEP IN THE DELTA JUNGLE, THERE IS A BARBED WIRE ENCLOSURE. INSIDE IT ARE 83 PRISONERS. MOTHERS WITH INFANTS, OLD ONES, HELPLESS AGAINST THE VIET CONG. THEY KNOW WHAT THEIR FATE WILL BE... THEY'LL BE SLAUGHTERED BY MACHINE GUNS AND HAND GRENADES AS SOON AS THE AMERICANS APPROACH...

LT. EGLUND EXPLAINS THIS TO THE CORRESPONDENT...

BUT, WHY? *NOT* THAT I BELIEVE WHAT YOU SAY...BUT WHAT *REASON* COULD THE CONG HAVE TO SLAUGHTER THEIR OWN COUNTRYMEN?

THEY'LL USE IT FOR PROPAGANDA. THE CONG WILL TELL OTHER VIET NAMESE VILLAGERS THAT U.S. MARINES *WIPED OUT* THE VILLAGE. THEY'LL SAY IF THE MARINES HAD STAYED AWAY, *NO ONE WOULD DIE!*

1000 YARDS FROM THE ENCLOSURE, THE 3RD SQUAD STARTS CRAWLING. THEY'VE GOT TO GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO THE CONG TO PREVENT THE MASSACRE WHICH WILL BEGIN THE INSTANT THE MARINES ARE DETECTED IN THE AREA...

...BUT THE MARINES ARE VERY QUIET...AND SKILLED IN THIS DEADLY JUNGLE GAME!

PASS THE WORD...PICK THE FARTHEST GUARDS FOR THE FIRST TARGET...DON'T GIVE ANY OF THEM A CHANCE TO FIRE AT THE PRISONERS.

POW

POWPOW

THE FIRST SHOT GALVANIZES THE CHARLIES INTO ACTION AGAINST THE HELPLESS PRISONERS.

GET THAT ONE NEAR THE CORNER...HE'S GOT GRENADES TOO.

POW POW

TALBOT CLEEVES TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS, IS CONVINCED OF THE EVIL INTENTIONS OF THE VIET CONG NOW...

CLICK CLICK

WHAM

THE SQUAD SAVED THEIR LIVES! NO QUESTION ABOUT IT NOW, THE CHARLIES WOULD'VE MURDERED THE...

WATCH IT!

RAT-A TAT-

POW POW

THE WRITER'S GETTIN' A *PIECE OF THE ACTION!*

BLAM

YOU'RE A REAL BRUTAL GUY, Y'KNOW THAT, WRITER? THE CHARLIE YOU JUST CLOBBERED IS ONLY A LITTLE GUY AND YOU'RE *BIG* AND *STRONG* AND...

OH, *SHUT UP!*

LATER, AFTER HELICOPTERS COME IN TO TAKE THE RESCUED PRISONERS TO A SAFE PLACE, CLEEVES APOLOGIZES TO LT. EGLUND AND THE SQUAD...

I WAS A GULLIBLE FOOL, LIEUTENANT.

DON'T APOLOGIZE TO ME, CLEEVES. JUST WRITE THE TRUTH ABOUT WHAT YOU SAW TODAY AND I'LL BE SATISFIED.

THE END

I'M JAPANESE

IT DIDN'T MATTER THAT GERRY MULTANI'S PARENTS WERE CAUCASIAN. HE'D LIVED AMONGST THE JAPANESE OF CALIFORNIA SO LONG THAT HE CONSIDERED HIMSELF ONE OF THEM. HE DIDN'T LIKE WHAT THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT WAS DOING TO HIS FRIENDS BECAUSE OF THEIR ROTTEN RELATIVES IN THE PACIFIC, BUT HE DIDNT LIKE THE IMPERIAL JAPANESE MORE! THAT'S WHY ONE DAY IN 1942, GERRY FOUND HIMSELF TRYING TO JOIN THE MARINES.

SORRY, KID! COME BACK IN A FEW YEARS WHEN YOU GET BIGGER! AND PUT ON SOME WEIGHT! MARINES ARE BEEFY ALL OVER!

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I BET IT WOULDN'T EVEN HELP IF I TOLD YOU THAT I KNOW HOW TO SPEAK JAPANESE!

SHUT THAT DOOR AND COME BACK IN HERE! AS I WAS SAYING THE MARINES NEED MEN LIKE YOU...

AND THAT'S HOW THE WHOLE THING STARTED...!! AFTER THAT WAS BOOT CAMP...THEN A SCHOOL NEAR SAN FRANCISCO LEARNING MORE JAPANESE. FINALLY, ALMOST TWO YEARS LATER, GERRY FOUND HIMSELF TIRED AND HUNGRY AND ALONE ON AN ISLAND IN THE PACIFIC.

I WONDER HOW LONG I'LL WANDER AROUND BEFORE I SEE ANOTHER MARINE! I'VE PROBABLY BEEN WRITTEN OFF AS DEAD SINCE I GOT SEPARATED FROM MY BUDDIES BACK THERE ON THE BEACH!

BLASTED SNIPER! I'M GETTING CARELESS!

KRACK

ZIINNG

MY IMPERIAL PIGEON FOUND HIMSELF A COZY NEST! TOO BAD I HAVE TO RUFFLE HIS FEATHERS A BIT!

IT'S EITHER YOU OR ME, BUDDY! AND IT AIN'T GONNA BE ME!

BLAM

HOPE NONE OF HIS BUDDIES ARE NEARBY...

LUCK WAS WITH MULTANI THAT DAY AND THE NEXT! HE WAS ALONE, BUT THE JUNGLE COVERED HIM UP COMPLETELY AND WHENEVER HE DID ENCOUNTER THE ENEMY, THEY ALWAYS CAME IN SECOND!

OPEN UP THEM GOLDEN GATES! CALIFORNIA, HERE I COME... WHAT!

BUT HERE IT WAS FATAL TO IGNORE ANY SUDDEN NOISE AND GERRY DUCKED INTO THE STREAM COMPLETELY.

DID YOU HEAR ANYTHING AS WE GOT CLOSE TO THE STREAM?

YES, BUT I THOUGHT I WAS IMAGINING THINGS!

IF YOU REALLY WANT TO WASH UP WHY NOT JOIN ME?

UUGGH

YOU'D THINK IT WAS SATURDAY NIGHT AROUND HERE THE WAY EVERYONE WANTS TO WASH UP!

POW

ONCE YOU FELLOWS ARE OUT OF THERE AND TIED UP, I'M GOING TO FINISH SOAKING THE DIRT OUT OF MY PORES!

IT WAS A MUCH CLEANER GERRY THAT JOINED A CAPTIVE AUDIENCE SOME MINUTES LATER. AND REMEMBERING HIS MANNERS, HE SPOKE PERFECT JAPANESE TO HIS GUESTS!

I DON'T LIKE TO BE INTERRUPTED IN THE MIDST OF MY BATH AS YOU GUYS FOUND OUT! NOW WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME WHERE YOU ARE FROM AND HOW FAR YOUR CAMP IS!

HE'S GOT TO BE JAPANESE! HOW ELSE WOULD HE BE SO NEAR TO THE CAVES AND SPEAK OUR LANGUAGE!

FURTHER UP THE STREAM IS A LARGE CLIFFSIDE FACING THE OCEAN. MOST OF US ARE HOLED UP THERE BECAUSE THE YANKEES ARE SHOOTING FROM SHIPS OFF SHORE AT US!

SURE I'M JAPANESE! I LEARNED ALL ABOUT BEING AND SPEAKING JAPANESE IN THE SAN FRANCISCO SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL HARD KNOCKS!

JUST WALK SLOW AND QUIET IN THE DIRECTION OF YOUR BUDDIES! I'M RATHER ANXIOUS TO SEE YOUR CAMPING GROUNDS!

TALK ABOUT "*DIGGING IN*" ANTS COULDN'T HAVE DONE A BETTER JOB!

AND THEN MULTANI'S BRAIN STARTED TO REEL AND WHEN IT STOPPED SPINNING, HE FOUND HIMSELF GASPING AT THE CRAZY IDEA HE HAD DREAMED UP!

THAT'S RIGHT, CHARLIE! JUST TAKE THEM OFF NICE AND SLOWLY! IT'S A LUCKY THING YOU'RE ABOUT MY SIZE, OTHERWISE YOU'D BE LEFT SHIVERING IN THE JUNGLE TONIGHT!

NOW IF YOU'LL ONLY BE GOOD BOYS AND STAY PUT, I'LL BE BACK WITH A FEW OF YOUR BUDDIES TO KEEP YOU COMPANY!

RUBBING HIS FACE IN DIRT, GERRY TRIED TO COVER HIS CAUCASIAN FEATURES AS BEST AS POSSIBLE. IT WOULDN'T DO TO WALK INTO THEIR STRONGHOLD LOOKING LIKE A YANK!

IT'S NOW, OR NEVER! HERE GOES!

SENTRY! TAKE ME TO YOUR COMPANY COMMANDER!

THAT LAST CAVE IS THE GENERAL'S QUARTERS! BUT SHOULDN'T YOU KNOW WHERE HIS CAVE IS?

OH, OH! GOT TO THINK FAST!

I'M FROM ANOTHER DIVISION AND WAS SENT BY MY COMMANDING OFFICER TO CONTACT YOUR GENERAL.

BUT WHY DIDN'T YOU RADIO YOUR COMING SO WE WOULD BE EXPECTING YOU?

YOU'RE GETTING A BIT TO INQUISITIVE! WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A LITTLE NAP WHILE I GET ON MY AFFAIRS!

AND RACING THROUGH THE DARKNESS, GERRY ARRIVED AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE GENERAL'S CAVE WHERE...

...AN AMERICAN! EVEN IN THAT UNIFORM I CAN SEE YOU ARE NOT ONE OF US!

REALIZING THAT HE CAN USE HIS KNOWLEDGE AS A SURPRIZE WEAPON SHOULD THE GENERAL TRY TO PLAY ANY TRICKS, GERRY REVERTS TO ENGLISH AND TALKS TO THE ADMIRAL!

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE SOME COMPANY! AND AS I WAS PASSING YOUR CAVE IT LOOKED SO COZY, I DECIDED TO DROP IN ON YOU!

YOU AMERICANS! IN THE MIDST OF DANGER, YOU STILL FIND TIME TO TURN FUNNY LINES OFF THE TIP OF YOUR TONGUE!

I'M THROUGH WITH REPARTEE, SIR! NOW I WANT YOU TO ORGANIZE THE ORDERLY SURRENDER OF YOUR MEN. MARINES ARE IN THE JUNGLE ALL ABOUT THIS CAMP! YOU CAN'T ESCAPE!

BUSHIDO, THE JAPANESE CODE OF THE WARRIOR, DOES NOT PERMIT ME TO DO SO! I WILL DIE AND SO WILL YOU!

AND WITH THAT THE GENERAL CALLED OUT TO SOME MEN FURTHER BACK IN THE CAVE IN JAPANESE! BUT GERRY NEVER LET ON THAT HE KNEW WHAT THE MAN WAS SAYING!

ﾌﾅﾆﾊﾝ!

OH, I'M FORGETTING MY MANNERS! I SHOULDN'T TALK IN MY NATIVE TONGUE WHEN A GUEST DOESN'T UNDERSTAND IT! MY MEN ARE ABOUT TO...

NO NEED TO REVERT TO ENGLISH GENERAL! I UNDERSTOOD EVERY WORD YOU SAID!

BLAM BLAM

NOW...LIKE I SAID BEFORE, MY MARINE BUDDIES ARE ALL AROUND THIS AREA! WILL YOU SURRENDER YOUR ARMS AND LET MY MEN TAKE OVER PEACEFULLY, OR ARE YOU GOING TO LET MEN WHO MIGHT WANT TO LIVE DIE LIKE RATS!

ALL THESE MEN WILL BE SLAUGHTERED LIKE ANIMALS IF YOU PERSIST IN YOUR BUSHIDO IDEALS. IT'S NOT EXACTLY BUSHIDO TO BE SMOKED OUT OF YOUR CAVES AND DIE IN A USELESS FASHION FOR NOTHING!

YOU WILL SURRENDER ALL YOUR ARMS! AND IN THE NEXT HOURS WHEN THE AMERICANS COME, YOU WILL OFFER NO RESISTANCE!

NOW THAT'S MORE LIKE IT, GENERAL!

I STILL HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT ONE THING...WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE MARINES I SAID WERE OUT HERE DON'T START APPEARING? MY GOOSE IS COOKED!

BUT THE GENERAL KEPT GERRY FROM THINKING OF THAT PROBLEM! HE DEMANDED THE RIGHT TO DIE AS A WARRIOR AND GERRY ALLOWED HIM TO DO SO.

MY RANK DOES NOT ALLOW ME TO LOSE FACE. I MUST ADHERE TO THE CODE OF THE BUSHIDO WARRIOR.

YES, GENERAL!

I AM READY TO JOIN MY ANCESTORS NOW!

THE SOUND OF THE SHOTS HAD STOPPED ECHOING ALONG THE CLIFFSIDE, WHEN GERRY HEARD OTHERS BEGIN. FROM THE JUNGLE AND OCEAN, GERRY HEARD VOICES OF MEN AND THE ROAR OF MOTORS. THE MARINES WERE LANDING, BUT WERE THEY IN FOR A SURPRISE!

BOOM BOOM RAT A-TAT TAT

END

BUG-OUT

WHEN THE CHARLIES SPRING THEIR TRAPS, CAPT. SILENSKY IS LEADING PFC. BECKER AND ME, CPL. FRANK MOORE, FROM THE CHOPPER LANDING AREA TOWARD DELTA COMPANY'S POSITION. I EMPTY THE CLIP IN MY M-16 AND DROP BEHIND A STUMP TO RELOAD... THAT'S WHEN THE CHARLIES RUSH THEM!

MOORE, COVER US, THEY...

CAPTAIN GOT IT... IF I KEEP QUIET THEY WON'T BUTCHER *ME* ALONG WITH *HIM* AN' *BECKER!*

POW!

POW!

LEGISAMON

B-648

SCRIPT: J.GILL. PENCILLED: E.LEGISAMON. INKED: E.LEGISAMON. LETTERED: A.MACHINE

BUT THEY DON'T BUTCHER THE SKIPPER. HE'S ALIVE... THE SLUGS WHICH PUT HIM DOWN ONLY STUNNED HIM FOR A MINUTE...

NO MOVE.

DO AS THEY SAY, BECKER. WE'LL WAIT FOR A BETTER CHANCE.

SHUT MOUTH, CAPTAIN.

OTHER MARINE RUN AWAY LIKE SCARED MOUSE.

IF HE'S STILL ALIVE I HOPE HE STAYS *OUT OF SIGHT.*

SHUT MOUTH!

THUD!

THEY'LL *BEAT* HIM TO DEATH! LAST MONTH THE VICTOR CHARLIES PARADED MARINE PRISONERS THROUGH THE MONTAGNARD VILLAGES UNTIL THEY DIED OF STARVATION AND INFECTION!

I SHOULD'VE DONE *SOMETHING!*

THERE THEY GO... HEADING INTO VIET CONG TERRITORY... I'M PRETTY SURE THEY WON'T DIE AN EASY DEATH. WHAT WILL I DO??

WHAT CAN ONE GUY DO?

ONE *MARINE* COULD DO A LOT...ONE MARINE LIKE CAPTAIN SILENSKY...HE PULLED ME OUT OF THE BURNING CHOPPER TWO WEEKS AGO WHEN I WAS HALF KNOCKED OUT AFTER THE CRASH! HE SAVED BARNABY WHEN THE CHARLIES HAD HIM PINNED IN THE HIGH GRASS! CAPTAIN SILENSKY WOULDN'T LET THEM TAKE *ME* AWAY LIKE THAT!

I GUESS I'M BETTER OFF DEAD THAN HAVING THIS TO REMEMBER!

I'LL STAY *CLOSE* TO THAT BUNCH. WATCH FOR MY CHANCE... THEN SPRING THEM IF I CAN!

I CAN TRACK PRETTY GOOD NOW. I MANAGE TO FOLLOW THE RIGHT TRAILS IN THE ROTTEN GREEN HELL THEY CALL JUNGLE OUT THIS WAY...

I WATCH THEM DRIVE THE SKIPPER AND BECKER INTO THE VILLAGE. BECKER'S LOSING BLOOD... HE WON'T LAST LONG IF THEY KEEP THIS UP.

SEE THE AMERICAN COWARDS. THEY ARE NOT FIGHTING MEN. THEY HAVE MUCH *FEAR* IN THEIR HEARTS.

THE CONG WILL KILL THEM. SMILE AND NOD SO IT DOES NOT HAPPEN *HERE*.

THEY'RE *HUMILIATING* THEM.

SEE THE COWARD? HE DOES NOT STRIKE BACK!

LAY OFF, CHARLIE.

SHUT MOUTH, COWARD!

¡THUD!

IF HE RAISES HIS GUN...*HE'S DEAD!*

LET THE WOMEN BANDAGE HIS WOUNDS. THE POLITICAL ADVISERS SAY IT IS GOOD TO SHOW THE PEASANTS *THE CONQUERED ENEMY!*

BECKER, THIS IS *MOORE*. I'M WAITIN' FOR THE RIGHT TIME TO SPRING YOU AND THE SKIPPER. TELL HIM... BUT I CAN'T DO IT HERE.

I WONDERED WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU. CAPTAIN SILENSKY SAID YOU MUST'VE BEEN KILLED FOR SURE!

ONE THING ABOUT VIET NAM I NEVER GOT USED TO IS THE CREEPING CRAWLING BITING STINGING POISONOUS CRITTERS THAT FLY, CRAWL, SWIM, AND CLING! BUT SOMEHOW I DON'T GET THE SHUDDERS NOW WHEN UNKNOWN VARMINTS STING, BITE, AND SLITHER...

HE SAID I MUST'VE BEEN KILLED. MEANIN'...IF I WASN'T, I WOULD'VE DONE SOMETHIN' TO HELP WHEN THE CHARLIES JUMPED US!

HE GOT A HIGHER OPINION OF ME THAN I DESERVE. THE TRUTH IS...*I BUGGED OUT*...BUT I'M *NOT* GONNA BUG OUT ON HIM *AGAIN!*

I WATCH, M-16 READY... BUT THE CHARLIES DON'T HURT THE CAPTAIN ANY MORE. THEY'RE JUST TRYING TO SCARE HIM A LITTLE.

YOU LIKE DIE NOW, CAPTAIN? DIE EASY?

YOU *CAN'T* KILL ME, CHARLIE. NOT WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE *PEKING POLITICAL ADVISER!*

SHUT MOUTH, LIAR!

THESE PEOPLE KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CONG! THE CHINESE FROM THE NORTH TELL YOU WHAT TO DO. YOU ARE LIKE PUPPETS WHO DANCE FOR YOUR MASTERS.

HE'S GOT MORE GUTS THAN A *BURGLAR*. THE MONTAGNARDS WILL REPEAT WHAT HE SAYS IN EVERY VILLAGE IN THE HIGHLANDS.

IN THE MORNING, THE VIET CONG DRIVE CAPTAIN SILENSKY AND BECKER OUT OF THE VILLAGE. THE MONTAGNARDS WATCH STONY-FACED... BUT ONCE MORE THEY'VE HAD A DEMONSTRATION OF THE VIET CONG'S POWER IN THE JUNGLE.

BE ALERT, MACK. JUST KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN ALL THE TIME.

USARMY

I TRY TO KEEP CLOSE TO THEM... AND ONE OF THEM HEARS SOMETHING.

SORRY, CHARLIE.

HE NEVER EVEN YELLED!

THAT'S ONE!

THE MARINES HAVE A FEW METHODS OF SILENTLY DEALING WITH AN ENEMY. THE CLEANEST IS A KARATE CHOP TO THE BASE OF THE BRAIN.

CONTINUED AFTER THE NEXT PAGE

I'M CLOSE TO THEM NOW...READY TO PICK OFF ANY MORE STRAYS IF I GET THE CHANCE. BUT THE VICTOR CHARLIE IN COMMAND SUDDENLY REALIZES THAT HIS GROUP IS CONSIDERABLY SMALLER NOW!

WHERE ARE LUC AND NE THIG? DO YOU HEAR ANYTHING, AN MIH?

PERHAPS BAD SPIRITS ARE HERE, LEADER. LET US KILL THE PRISONERS AND LEAVE THIS BAD PLACE.

OUR MAIN CONG BASE IS NOT FAR. I WISH TO LET YOU SEE THE POWERFUL FORCES WE HAVE PREPARED BUT THAT PLEASURE IS DENIED ME. THIS IS WHERE YOU SHALL DIE!

IT AIN'T THAT *EASY*, CHARLIE!

I'LL GET *ONE*, ANYHOW!

CAPTAIN SILENSKY LEAPS AWAY... GIVING HE ROOM TO PUMP A SHORT BURST INTO THE COMMIE BOSS. A SECOND BURST CUTS DOWN THE OTHER GUARD...

BECKER TOLD ME YOU TALKED TO HIM IN THE VILLAGE LAST NIGHT. WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THEY JUMPED US YESTERDAY?

I HAD A BENT AMMO CLIP... I WAS TRYING TO RAM IT INTO MY M-16 AND THE FIGHT WAS OVER BEFORE I GOT IT IN.

COME ON... WE'RE GOING TO FIND THAT VC BASE THE COMMIE WAS BRAGGING ABOUT!

WE FIND THE COMMIE SUPPLY BASE.

NOW WE KNOW. I'LL MARK IT ACCURATELY ON MY MAP AND THEN HEAD BACK.

I AIN'T GONNA *BUG OUT* AGAIN, SKIPPER, BUT I SURE AM *NERVOUS* THESE DAYS!

YEAH, I KNOW. YOU'RE THE BIGGEST CHICKEN IN THE MARINE CORPS, RIGHT?

NOBODY ENJOYS FIGHTING CHARLIES IN THE JUNGLE LIKE THIS, MACK...AND IF YOUR GUN IS EMPTY, THERE AIN'T MUCH YOU CAN DO... EXCEPT FOR WHAT YOU DID! NOW, LET'S GO. I WANTA PASS THIS INFO ALONG TO THE MARINE AIR WINGS!

LATER IN THE DAY... OUR MARINE SKYRAIDERS HIT THE TARGET. AND THERE ISN'T ENOUGH LEFT TO KEEP FOR SOUVENIRS.

END